

INFORMAZIONE

informazione – formazione – azione

66

may 2023



IN THE SCHOOL OF GRACE

“He is such a good teacher!” This phrase is the ambition of all teachers engaged in education, especially in a Bible school. Not so much for mere personal gratification, as important as that is, but because a good teacher succeeds in facilitating the learning of content, concepts and methods and, above all, in generating in the students a passion for the subject taught. If we have been blessed with such teachers, we understand how crucial this ability is.

As believers, we all have an extraordinary teacher, namely, the grace of God! Paul writes precisely this in his letter to Titus: “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age” Titus 2:11-12. We often think of grace as God’s unmerited favour that gives us forgiveness and makes us His chil-

dren. Very true. But it does not end there! Using the Greek verb *paideuō*, the same root from which the English term pedagogy is derived, Paul emphasises that grace continually works by instructing and training us with patience and determination. This is because he is well aware that we are so radically contaminated by sin. We cannot untangle ourselves on our own. We can neither abandon ways of thinking, speaking and acting with our own wisdom, nor with our own resolve and strength. We need a guide to instruct us in our choices, correct us in our mistakes, and remind us of past experiences in order to learn from them. Growth, in fact, is not a linear process, in any sphere of life. It is a tangled zig-zag full of imperfections, mistakes and new beginnings. In any case, grace knows how to make us grow and knows how to turn complicated situations into eternal blessings. Not only that, grace renews in us the passion to live a holy life and the passion for this God who loved us and gave

himself for us (see Titus 2:13ff, full of magnificent and wonderful truths). Of course, this grace is an expression of our God, the Teacher par excellence, who through the Lord Jesus working in us by His Spirit, makes our growth towards holiness and maturity a reality for every disciple who is willing to learn.

Holiness and maturity are precisely one of the couplets that express the values we embrace at IBEI. Indeed, we want every student and staff member to grow “in holiness, that is, one’s own moral virtues and consecration to God, through study, practical service and community interaction. This growth aims to be balanced, to involve the whole person, and to result in a solid personal maturity” (from our Ethical Values www.ibei.it/en/in_a_nutshell/). As teachers, we wish to assist God’s grace to facilitate the growth of our students, knowing that we ourselves are still in formation, in the school of grace!

Where do our students come from?



New Distance Learning School in Albanian!

In January 2023 the Albanian language distance school began! We are grateful to the Lord for this new opportunity for service. Here are the testimonies of a couple of students

who completed the first learning activity (Survey of the Gospels):
“I think it is a very good course in every aspect... it has helped me as I used to have to make huge efforts

to look for the historical, economic and demographic background of the Gospels in preparing messages for the church... I am looking forward to starting another course.”

“I think it is the right investment for all Christians who want to deepen their knowledge of the Word of God.”

New Staff Members

We are Fabrizio and Elaine Toni and we are excited to live and serve here at IBEI as pastoral care coordinators. Our main role is to take care of residential students through mentoring and discipleship activities, at individual and community levels.

In addition to this, we help in hosting teachers or believers visiting Rome, and coordinate the work and maintenance of the campus. Fabrizio also continues to co-teach Personal Growth Projects and Ministry Projects.

Before moving to IBEI, Fabrizio worked for four years with a church in Verona and before that taught Religious

Studies at Grace International school in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Elaine taught high school mathematics for fifteen years in Verona, Thailand and Scotland, and served young people as a mentor.

We have two children, Rebecca (10 years old) and Matteo (6 years old).



Missionary trip to Romania and Moldova

Again this year, we residential school students had the opportunity to participate in a missionary trip to Romania and Moldova, with the aim of helping the work coordinated and led by Emanuel Besleaga. Thank God, we were able to deliver five suitcases of medications to Ukraine with gifts from Italian believers. After landing in Romania, our group split up for the first two days: a couple of students stayed in Romania while the rest of the group went to Moldova. The guys in Romania offered practical help at the warehouse of the missionary centre, which collects

and sorts basic necessities for Ukraine and for the needy Romanians. The rest of us who went to Moldova had the opportunity to deliver bags of food directly to families and individuals in the small community of Niorcani, a town that appears to be forgotten by everyone, like many others in this nation. We also had the opportunity to run a programme for local children, and to encourage the people we met. What did we take away from this trip? The faces of the people we served! But most of all, we saw God



at work through us, miserable earthly vessels. We appreciated how in the darkness of a forgotten village, the light of Christ can penetrate, illuminate and warm hearts. We went to offer help and encouragement. We thank God for this opportunity!

LUX BIBLICA Revelation: purpose, interpretation and preaching

Lux Biblica 67 aims to accompany the reader to think carefully and deeply about the text of the last book of the Bible in the light of broad considerations about the text itself and related texts. Very of-

ten, in fact, in biblical exegesis we suffer from an approach that focuses on detail, on individual verses and words, but loses sight of the whole, the sum total of words and verses. This approach is as widespread as it is damaging to Revelation. The details intrigue and enchant us, but at the same time confound and delude us, derailing and misleading us because we approach them unaware of their big picture. And it is precisely

analysing this bigger picture that lies at the heart of this magazine. The reader, therefore, does not have in his hands a commentary on the Apocalypse, nor even a complete study manual. Rather, a tool, nourished by centuries of interpretative history with all its successes and failures, that offers valuable considerations on the literary genre, style, keys to reading, and principles to keep in mind in the interpretation and teaching of this book.

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Residential school

The residential school has for decades been IBEI's main instrument to support the church by training believers through biblical, theological and ministerial studies. It is a unique opportunity of its kind in Italy, being the only interdenominational residential training programme. We believe that even today this is a valuable tool in the life of a believer, equipping him for effective service in the work of God's kingdom. If you want to dedicate a special time to Bible study in a community of believers, to grow in faith and learn how



to better serve the Lord, this is your chance! Don't miss it!

Partial scholarships are also available, thanks to supporters who donate specifically for this. To contribute to the scholarship fund, visit [IBEI.IT/EN/PARTNER](https://www.ibeit.it/en/partner)

NEW EXTENSION SCHOOL in ROME



In September 2023, God willing, the new Rome extension school will start at the Alpha Omega Evangelical Church. This is a programme that allows students to experience holistic growth because it combines part-time study with the personal commitments of family, work and church. The in-person lessons will take place one Saturday a month, al-

lowing direct and dynamic contact with teachers and other students, and includes five learning activities during the academic year. This programme will be in two steps: after 2 years students will achieve an intermediate degree (Attestato di teologia), while the completion of the 4 year course will allow them to obtain a Certificate of Theology.

Celebrate with us
the closing of the 2022-23 academic year
on **10 June at our campus!**



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Via del Casale Corvio, 50 - 00132 Roma

Tel. 06 20762293 - 06 20765413

e-mail: segreteria@ibeit.it